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## Experiencing Culture

*a step further into Social Studies of Science*

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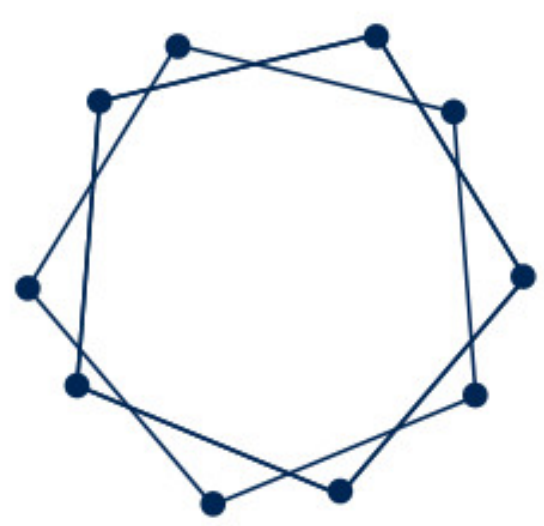
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# Experiencing Culture

## A step further into Social Studies of Science

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### 1. Science as Socio-cultural phenomenon

- In contrast to existing Epistemology, History of Science (Kuhn, 1962) and Sociology of Scientific Knowledge (1983) have offered a historical, critical understanding of scientific activity
- As long as science takes place in socio-cultural environments, political guidance, economic influence and ideological alignment are constitutive elements; rather than undesirable obstacles

### 2. Science in the making

#### *Manufacturing (Publishable) Knowledge*

- Being the most direct link with society, published scientific knowledge has been in focus for social studies of science
- This has opened a former closed 'black-box', making understandable the process behind the main output of scientific communities
- But, is all scientific activity directed to produce this kind of knowledge? Is there room for curiosity?

#### *Communities in Practice*

- As has been largely shown, science is always made by institutional collectives
- Scientific communities establish research priorities, particular pathways and valid methods
- Are scientists only followers of collective guidelines for their inquiries?

### 3. Scientists as Persons

- To what extent current social studies of science have neglected the fact the science is made by persons?
- Persons which are socio-cultural beings indeed, but also have personal stories and interests

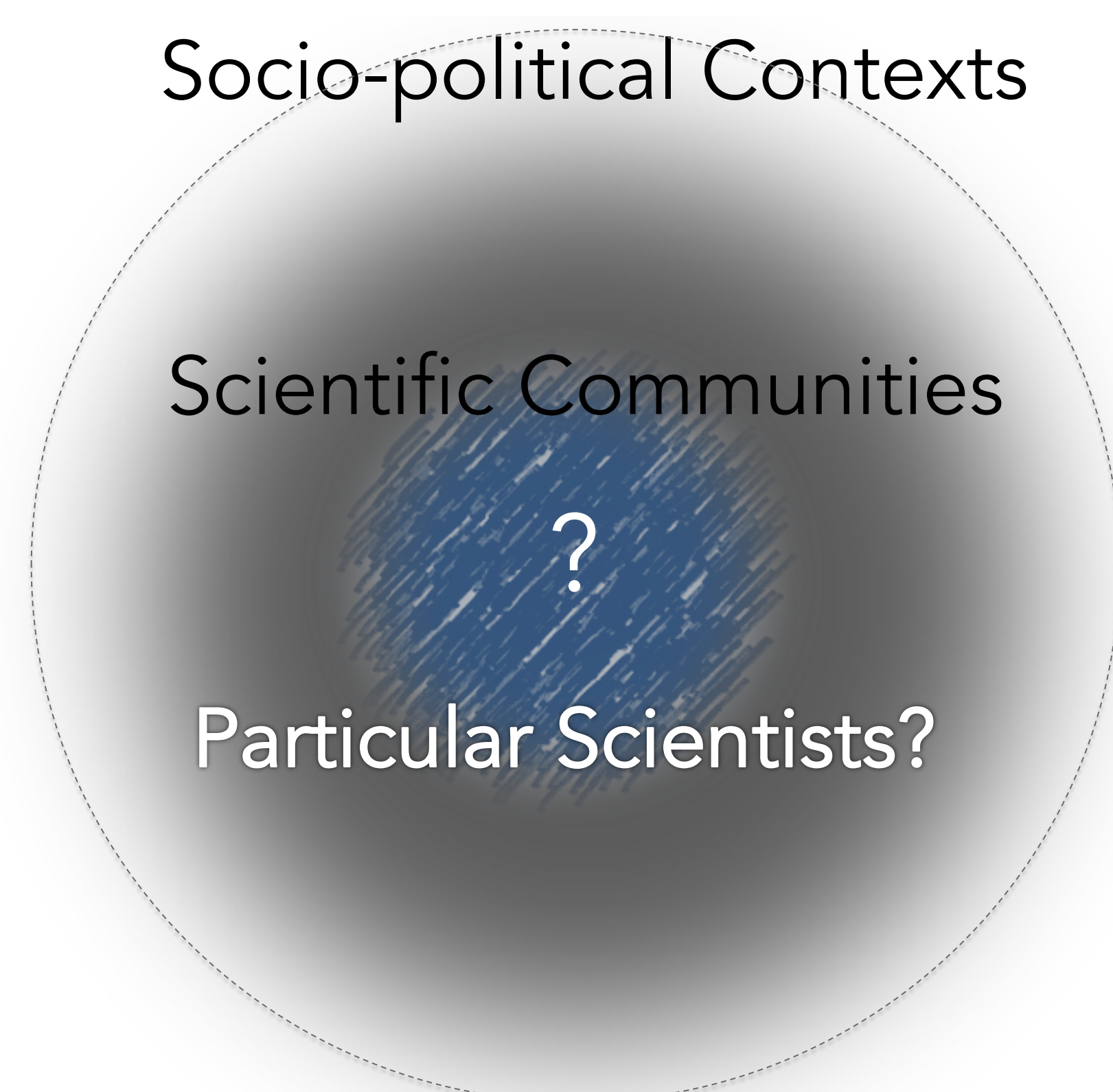


Fig 1. Layers of scientific activity: What is the role of persons?

### 4. Discussion

- Is it relevant to include a personal perspective of scientists for social studies of science?
- How this personal experiencing interacts with communitarian and social influences?
- Does the latter involves coming back to epistemological solipsism and individualism?